Docket No. 30004640-02 US (1509-225)PATENT

THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE
BEFORE THE BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

In re Application of	
Inventors: Rychard Jeffery HAWKES et al.	Confirmation No. 1504
U.S. Patent Application No. 09/977,497	Group Art Unit: 2157
:	
Filed: October 16, 2001	Examiner: El Hadji Malick SALL
:	
For: INVITING ASSISTANCE ENTITY INTO A NETWORK COMMUNICATION SESSION	

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Attn: BOARD OF PATENT APPEALS AND INTERFERENCES

BRIEF ON APPEAL

Further to the Notice of Appeal filed September 22, 2005, in connection with the above-identified application on appeal, herewith is Appellant's Brief on Appeal. The Commissioner is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 08-2025 in the amount of $500 for the statutory fee.

To the extent necessary, Appellant hereby requests any required extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge any required fees not otherwise provided for to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

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Docket No.: 30004640-02 US (1509-225) PATENT

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

In re Application of	: EXPEDITED PROCEDURE : Response under 37 CFR 1.116
Rycharde Jeffery HAWKES et al.	: Confirmation No. 1504
U.S. Patent Application No. 09/977,497	: Group Art Unit: 2157
Filed: October 16, 2001	: Examiner: El Hadji Malick SALL

For: INVITING ASSISTANCE ENTITY INTO A NETWORK COMMUNICATION SESSION

AMENDMENT UNDER RULE 116

Commissioner for Patents
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Sir:

This paper is submitted in reply to the Office Action mailed June 22, 2005, which was made Final, and is filed concurrently with the Appeal Brief. Applicants respectfully request that the following amendment **as to form** and solely cancelling a claim as permitted by MPEP §1206 be entered to place this application in condition for allowance.

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Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Please **cancel claim 21**:

1. (Previously presented) A method of inviting an assistant entity into an existing communication session established by a service system with an associated transport mechanism for the exchange of data across a network between endpoint entities joined to the session comprising the steps of:

(a) selecting, by the service system, an appropriate assistant entity from a group of assistant entities taking account of context data concerning an existing session responsive to receipt of a request from a first endpoint entity already joined to the session and constituted by a party having an endpoint system connected to the network to the service system requesting the presence of an assistant entity in the session, the request directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the existing session; and

(b) joining the selected assistant entity to the existing sessions.

2. (Original) A method according to claim **1**, wherein the assistant entity is a customer service representative and associated endpoint system.

3. (Original) A method according to claim **1**, wherein the assistant entity is a software-based entity with an associated knowledge base.

4. (Original) A method according to claim **1**, wherein the data network is the internet, and the existing session has multiple parties connected to it through web browser functionality of

associated endpoint systems, the service system providing follow-me page-push functionality to the party endpoint systems whereby to enable co-browsing by the parties joined to the session.

5. **(Original)** A method according to claim 4, wherein the context of the existing communication session comprises the subject of a web page currently being jointly browsed by the parties joined to the session service.

6. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 1, wherein in step (a) the first endpoint entity uses an active feature of a web page served by the service system to request that a assistant entity join the session.

7. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 1, wherein the service system, in setting up a communication session, creates a service-session functional entity which in the course of joining said endpoint entity to the session, sends connection details of the transport mechanism associated with the communication session to the endpoint entity or its proxy then using the connection details to connect itself to the transport mechanism.

8. **(Original)** A method according to claim 7, wherein the service-session functional entity comprises a session instance with generic behaviour for adding and removing endpoint entities to the communication session and for recording the endpoint entities currently joined to the communication session, and an associated service instance with service-specific behaviour determining when the session instance is to add and remove endpoint entities.

9. **(Previously presented)** A method according to claim 1, wherein the service system, in setting up a communication session, creates a service-session functional entity that comprises a session instance with generic behaviour for adding and removing endpoint entities to the

communication session and for recording the endpoint entities currently joined to the communication session, and an associated service instance with service-specific behaviour determining when the session instance is to add and remove endpoint entities.

10. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 1, wherein the transport mechanism associated with a communication session provides multiple data transfer channel, for different media types, between endpoint entities joined to the communication session.

11. (Previously presented) A method according to claim **10**, wherein the endpoint entities include web browser functionality and the service system provides functionality, and the transport mechanism provides channels, for at least two of the following:

text chat;

follow-me page-push; and

packetized voice.

12. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 7, wherein the transport mechanism associated with a communication session provides multiple data transfer channels, for different media types, between endpoint entities joined to the communication session, the connection details passed to said endpoint entity or its proxy comprising details of the media channels associated with the communication session, and the endpoint entity or its proxy using these details to establish corresponding media channel connections to the transport mechanism.

13. (Previously presented) A method according to claim 7, wherein the state of connection of said endpoint entity to the transport mechanism is signaled to the session-service functional entity by leg messages passed between a leg controller of the endpoint entity or its proxy and a corresponding leg controller of the service-session functional entity.

14. (Original) A method according to claim **7**, wherein the second endpoint entity or its proxy already has connection functionality for joining and participating in a communication session, the service-session functional entity of the communication session to which the endpoint entity is to be joined inviting this entity into the session by sending said connection details to the connection functionality of the entity or its proxy.

15. (Original) A method according to claim **7**, wherein the service-session functional entity, in joining the first endpoint entity into the communication session, sends the latter both connection functionality for joining and participating in a communication session, and said connection details.

16. (Original) A method according to claim **15**, wherein the connection details and functionality are sent in association with a web page served by the service system.

17. (Previously presented) A service system comprising:

a session entity for establishing communication sessions and controlling the joining of endpoint entities to each such session;

a transport entity for establishing a transport mechanism for each session established by the session entity, the transport mechanism being arranged to allow the exchange of data across a network between endpoint entities joined to the session;

request-reception means operative to receive a request from a first endpoint entity already joined to a session and constituted by a party having an endpoint system connected to the network, the request being arranged for requesting the presence of an assistant entity in the session and directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the existing communication session; and

assistant-selection means arranged to be responsive to the receipt of said request by the request-reception means to select an appropriate assistant entity from a group of possible assistant entities taking account of the context of the existing communication session, the assistant-selection means being operative to cause the session entity to join the selected assistant entity to the session.

18. (Original) A service system according to claim 17, wherein the assistant entity is a customer service representative and associated endpoint system.

19. (Original) A service system according to claim 17, wherein the assistant entity is a software-based entity with an associated knowledge base.

20. (Previously presented) A service system according to claim 17, wherein the network is the Internet and the service system being arranged for providing follow-me page-push functionality to the party endpoint systems whereby to enable co-browsing by the parties joined to the session.

21. (Canceled)

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REMARKS

Claims 1-20 are pending.

Claim 21 is hereby cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 07-1337 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

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TABLE OF AUTHORITIES

Cases

I. Real Party in Interest

The real party in interest is Hewlett Packard Development Company, L.P., a Texas limited partnership.

II. Related Appeals and Interferences

There are no related appeals and/or interferences.

III. Status of Claims

No claims are allowed.

Claim 21 has been canceled.

Claims 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19 and 21 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bentley et al. (USP 5,914,951) in view of Khouri et al. (USP 6,678,718).

Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-16 and 20 are rejected under USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bentley et al. (USP 5,914,951 in view of Khouri et al. (USP 6,678,718) and further in view of Brown et al. (USP 6,385,646).

IV. Status of Amendments

Appellant is filing concurrently herewith an amendment after final which has not been entered. Said amendment is directed solely to the cancellation of claim 21 and as such Appellants assume the amendment will be entered for purposes of this Appeal Brief.

V. Summary of Claimed Subject Matter

A method embodiment of the claimed subject matter concerns inviting an assistant entity (e.g., a customer service representative (CSR) 74) into an existing communication session (e.g., a session 11) between entities 12A, B, C over a network. (Instant specification at page 1, lines 5-9 and FIGs. 1, 23). A service system (e.g., a call-center management system 72) selects an assistant entity 74 from a group of assistant entities. The service system 72 selects the assistant entity based on context data about the existing session 11. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 24-28). The service system 72 selects the entity in response to receiving a request from a first endpoint entity (e.g., a group member as indicated in FIG. 23) already joined to the existing session 11. For example, a member of a group of friends presses an "invite CSR" button 122 to cause an HTML request to be sent to the service system. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 21-26).

The first endpoint entity is connected to the service system and requests the presence of an assistant entity in the existing session 11. The request received by the service system from the first endpoint entity directly or indirectly indicates the identity of the existing session 11 to which the entity is connected. In an embodiment, the request includes a secret session identifier for the existing session 11, along with additional context about the page currently being browsed. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 24-26). The selected assistant entity is joined to the existing session 11, e.g., "to provide advice" to a "group of friends . . . browsing the Web together and interacting." (Instant specification at page 53, lines 17-19). In this manner, an appropriate assistant entity is selected and joined to an existing communication session.

One or more of the foregoing advantages are achieved by the present claimed subject matter as recited in the method of independent claim 1 which provides: "A method

of inviting an assistant entity into an existing communication session established by a service system with an associated transport mechanism for the exchange of data across a network between endpoint entities joined to the session, comprising the steps of:

(a) selecting, by the service system, an appropriate assistant entity from a group of assistant entities taking account of context data concerning an existing session responsive to receipt of a request from a first endpoint entity already joined to the session and constituted by a party having an endpoint system connected to the network to the service system requesting the presence of an assistant entity in the session, the request directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the existing session; and

(b) joining the selected assistant entity to the existing sessions."

A service system embodiment of the claimed subject matter includes a session entity 11, a transport entity (e.g., session transport 15 and/or session transport manager 19), request-reception means (e.g., session mediation server (SMS) 67), and assistant-selection means (e.g., communication session manager (CSM) 69). The session entity establishes communication sessions 11 and controls the joining of endpoint entities to established sessions 11. One or more entities 12 A, B, C can be added or removed as directed by a communication session manager 14. Sessions 11 are modeled in the system by appropriate data structures and method for keeping track of a current existing session and participants thereof, and effecting operations such as adding and removing participants from an existing session 11. (Instant specification at page 5, line 28 bridging over to page 6, line 6).

The transport entity 15 establishes a transport mechanism for each session 11 and effects data communication between endpoint systems corresponding to session participant entities 12 A, B, C through one or more media channels 17a, 17b, etc. (Instant specification at page 6, lines 8-15).

The request-reception means (e.g., a session mediation server 67, Instant specification at page 32, lines 9-18, page 53, line 16 through page 54, line 3, and FIGs. 3, 6, 7, and 23) receives a request from a first endpoint entity 12 A, B, C already joined to the existing communication session 11. The received request includes a request for the presence of an assistant entity (CSR 74) in the existing session 11 and directly or indirectly indicates the identity of the session. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 19-26 and FIG. 23).

The assistant-selection means (e.g., a CSM 69, Instant specification at page 31, line 30 through page 32, line 7, page 53, lines 26-30, and FIGs. 3, 6, 7, and 23) selects an appropriate assistant entity 74 from a group of possible assistant entities in response to receipt of the request indicating the identity of an existing session 11. The assistant-selection means selects an assistant entity 74 based on the context of the existing communication session 11 and causes the joining of the selected assistant entity 74 to the existing communication session 11. (Instant specification at page 53, lines 26-30 and FIG. 23).

One or more of the foregoing advantages are achieved by the present claimed subject matter as recited in the apparatus of independent claim 17 which provides: "A service system comprising:

a session entity for establishing communication sessions and controlling the joining of endpoint entities to each such session;

a transport entity for establishing a transport mechanism for each session established by the session entity, the transport mechanism being arranged to allow the exchange of data across a network between endpoint entities joined to the session;

request-reception means operative to receive a request from a first endpoint entity already joined to a session and constituted by a party having an endpoint system connected to the network, the request being arranged for requesting the presence of an assistant entity in the session and directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the existing communication session; and assistant-selection means arranged to be responsive to the receipt of said request by the request-reception means to select an appropriate assistant entity from a group of possible assistant entities taking account of the context of the existing communication session, the assistant-selection means being operative to cause the session entity to join the selected assistant entity to the session.

VII. Grounds of Rejection to be Reviewed on Appeal

A. Whether Bentley et al. and Khouri et al. render unpatentable claims 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

B. Whether Bentley et al., Khouri et al. and Brown et al. render unpatentable claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-16 and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

VIII. Argument

A. Claims 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19 and 20 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Bentley in view of Khouri

Claim 1

The rejection of claims 1-3, 6, 9-10, and 17-19 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Bentley in view of Khouri is hereby traversed.

Turning first to the Examiner's Response to Arguments at page 17, section 5. (A) of the Final Official Action of June 22, 2005, the Examiner asserts that Khouri discloses a request directly or indirectly indicating the identity of an existing session as claimed in claim 1. This is incorrect. Khouri at column 2, lines 2-7 describes a request including a web page identifier identifying a web page being viewed by a user issuing the request. Khouri specifies the web page identifier to be a uniform resource locator (URL), i.e., a numeric or alphanumeric string identifier of a web page, and not a session identifier. Khouri at column 3, lines 26-31 and column 4, lines 44-49.

Khouri fails to disclose an existing communication session between endpoint entities over a network. Khouri describes a user viewing a web page obtained from a web server without describing or suggesting the existence of a communication session, let alone a communication session between endpoint entities, e.g., two or more users, over a network. The Khouri web page viewing is not the same as a communication session to which one or

more entities can be added or removed to enable communication between connected entities. As described in further detail at page 7, lines 6-15 of the instant specification:

> **"Communication Session** – A communication session 11 is representation of the *state* of a set of communicating entities. An entity (participant) 12 will in most cases be a person, although software automata or *Bots* can also be participating entities. By *communicating* is meant that entities are using one or media types to communicate, such as speech (audio), video, plain text, diagrams and illustrations, graphics, animations and 3D content, the kind of communications that are appropriate between human beings who want to share information. By *state* is meant the collective attributes of a specific session: the identities of the communicating entities, the media types in use, the pattern of distribution of information, global session properties (such as admission criteria), privileged members of the set, etc."

Based on the foregoing, Khouri fails to disclose an existing communication session and the rejection of claim 1 should be reversed.

Further, and in response to the Examiner's Response at pages 17 and 18, section 5. (B) of the Final Official Action, Khouri's web page identifier merely allows an agent to view a web page being viewed by the requesting user without being joined to a session to which the user is already connected. That is, the agent obtains another copy from the web server of the web page being viewed by the user. Khouri fails to disclose the agent being joined, or being able to be joined, to an existing session between endpoint entities based on the web page identifier. As Khouri fails to disclose a communication session, as described above in detail, Khouri is additionally unable to join the agent to a session because the identifier provided identifies only the URL of the web page being viewed and not a session to which the user viewing the web page is associated. In order for the Khouri agent to communicate with the user, the agent uses the public switch telephone network (PSTN) to establish a new communication session with the user. (Khouri at column 3, lines 59-61). Contrary to the Examiner's unfounded inherency assertion that Khouri at column 2, lines 7-

8 ("system then establishes a connection between the user and the agent") discloses joining a selected assistant entity to an existing session, the identified sentence in Khouri refers to the placing of a telephone call between the agent and the user, i.e., the creation of a new communication session.

The fact that a certain result or characteristic may occur or be present in the prior art is not sufficient to establish the inherency of that result or characteristic. In re Rijckaert, 9 F.3d 1531, 1532, 28 U.S.P.Q.2d 1955, 1956 (Fed. Cir. 1993); In re Oelrich, 666 F.2d 578, 581-82, 212 U.S.P.Q. 323, 326 (C.C.P.A. 1981). To establish inherency, extrinsic evidence must make clear that the missing descriptive matter is necessarily present in the thing described in the reference and that it would be so recognized by persons of ordinary skill in the art. Inherency may not be established by possibilities or probabilities. The mere fact that a certain thing may result from a given set of circumstances is not sufficient. In re Roberston, 169 F.3d 743, 745, 49 U.S.P.Q.2d 1949, 1950-51 (Fed. Cir. 1999). In relying upon a theory of inherency, the Examiner must provide a basis in fact or technical reasoning to reasonably support the determination that the allegedly inherent characteristic necessarily flows from the teachings of the prior art. Ex parte Levy, 17 U.S.P.Q.2d 1461, 1464 (B.P.A.I. 1990). Since the Examiner has not provided a rationale or evidence to show that either Bentley or Khouri inherently joins a selected assistant entity to an existing communication session, the rejection of claims 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 17, 18, 19 and 21 based on Bentley et al. in view of Khouri et al. is incorrect and must be withdrawn.

As described above, the Khouri agent is not joined to an existing communication session to which the user is a participant, rather the agent places a telephone call to the user. Based on the foregoing, Khouri fails to disclose a session identifier and the rejection of claim 1 should be reversed.

Bentley fails to cure the above-noted deficiencies of Khouri as first, Bentley fails to disclose that the request sent by a first endpoint entity to a service system indicates the identity of an existing communication session as set forth in Appellants' claim 1. In the Abstract, Bentley describes customer access of a company computer system via a data network and requesting contact with a customer service representative. There is no description in Bentley of the customer contact request indicating the identity of the existing session to which the customer is already joined. Appellants requested the Examiner to specifically identify any description of the missing element in Bentley and the Examiner has failed to so identify any such description and has instead asserted the erroneous combination of Khouri. Bentley, at column 2, lines 14-18, describes the initiation of communication between a customer service representative and a customer and does not describe communication of a session identifier.

Second, Bentley fails to disclose a service system joining a selected assistant entity to a session. Appellants again note that Bentley describes two separate contacts among the customer and the company and customer service representative, Bentley does not disclose the joining of a customer service representative to an existing session involving the customer. According to the Abstract and column 10, lines 15-19 and lines 26-29, Bentley "may use a CSR computer system . . . to initiate data communication with the customer computer system 18." Thus, Bentley fails to describe joining an assistant to an existing session. Rather, Bentley (similar to Khouri as discussed above) describes establishing a new communication between the customer and the customer service representative. Appellants also requested the Examiner to identify with specificity by column and line

number where Bentley discloses the claimed subject matter and the Examiner has failed to identify any such description in Bentley.

Based on either of the foregoing reasons, Bentley fails to cure the above-noted deficiencies of Khouri and the rejection of claim 1 should be reversed.

Further, neither Bentley nor Khouri disclose a service system selecting an appropriate assistant entity based on context data about the existing communication session. The Examiner's inherency argument based on the vague statement in Bentley regarding selection "based on the customer's needs and efficiency considerations" notwithstanding, the Examiner has failed to identify any disclosure in either Bentley or Khouri of the service system selecting the assistant entity based on context data about the existing communication session. The standard for an assertion of inherency was discussed above and is equally applicable.

Further still, the Examiner asserts without identifying any technical reasoning or motivation that a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the present invention would have been motivated to combine Bentley with Khouri in order to allow authentication. "When an obviousness determination is based on multiple prior art references, there must be a showing of some 'teaching, suggestion, or reason' to combine the references." Winner International Royalty Corp. v. Wang, 53 USPQ2d 1580, 1586 (Fed. Cir. 2000). The Examiner has failed to make such a showing supporting the applied combination of references and therefore the applied combination of references is improper. The Examiner is in error for any of the above reasons and has not made out a prima facie case of obviousness, and the rejection of claim 1 should be reversed.

Based on each of the foregoing reasons, claim 1 is patentable over Bentley in view of Khouri and the rejection should be reversed.

Claims 2, 3, 6, 9, and 10 depend, either directly or indirectly, from claim 1, include further important limitations, and are patentable over Bentley in view of Khouri for at least the reasons advanced above with respect to claim 1.

Claim 3

The arguments presented above with respect to claim 1 from which claim 3 depends are equally applicable to claim 3 and hereby incorporated herein. With further specific reference to claim 3, Bentley fails to disclose that the assistant entity is a software-based entity. Bentley describes a customer service representative communicating with a customer and transferring a software program to the customer. The customer service representative is not described as being a software-based entity. Contrary to the Examiner's assertion regarding Bentley disclosing transmission of an updated software program to a customer, Bentley fails to disclose that the customer service representative is a software program. For at least this additional reason, the rejection of claim 3 should be reversed.

Claim 9

The arguments presented above with respect to claim 1 from which claim 9 depends are equally applicable to claim 9 and hereby incorporated herein. With further specific reference to claim 9, Bentley fails to disclose a generic behavior for adding and removing endpoint entities to the communication session. The Bentley-described adding, changing, or deleting of selection criteria is not the same as adding and removing endpoint entities to an existing session. For at least this additional reason, the rejection of claim 9 should be reversed.

Claim 10

The arguments presented above with respect to claim 1 from which claim 10 depends are equally applicable to claim 10 and hereby incorporated herein. With further specific reference to claim 10, Bentley fails to disclose a transport mechanism associated with a communication session providing multiple data transfer channels, for different media types, between endpoint entities joined to the communication session. Bentley describes a voice system supporting multiple telephones and a telecommunication control device supporting multiple telephone calls; however, Bentley fails to describe either the voice system or telecommunication control device associated with a communication session and providing multiple data transfer channels between endpoint entities joined to the session. Further, Bentley fails to disclose the transport mechanism associated with a communication session providing multiple data transfer channels for different media types. Bentley discloses only voice communication media type. For at least this additional reason, the rejection of claim 10 should be reversed.

Claim 17

Claim 17 is patentable over Bentley in view of Khouri for reasons similar to those advanced above with respect to claim 1. Specifically, Bentley, singly or in combination with Khouri, fails to disclose that (1) the request from the first endpoint entity indicates the identity of the existing session, and (2) assistant-selection means joins the selected assistant entity to the existing session. For either of these reasons, claim 17 is patentable over Bentley in view of Khouri, and the rejection should be reversed.

Claims 18 and 19 depend from claim 17, include further important limitations, and are patentable over Bentley for at least the reasons advanced above with respect to claim 17.

B. Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-16, and 20 are patentable under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Bentley in view of Khouri and further in view of Brown

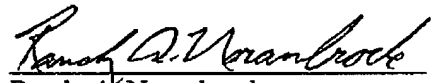
The rejection of claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-16, and 20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bentley in view of Khouri and further in view of Brown et al. (U.S. 6,385,646) is hereby traversed. Brown does not cure the deficiencies of Bentley and Khouri noted above. The arguments presented above with respect to claims 1 and 17 apply equally and are hereby incorporated herein with respect to claims 4, 5, 7, 8, and 11-16 and 20, respectively. For at least these reasons, the rejection of claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11-16, and 20 should be reversed.

IX. Conclusion

Reversal of the rejection is in order.

Respectfully submitted,

Rychard Jeffery HAWKES et al.

By: 
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X. Claims Appendix

1. A method of inviting an assistant entity into an existing communication session established by a service system with an associated transport mechanism for the exchange of data across a network between endpoint entities joined to the session, comprising the steps of:

(a) selecting, by the service system, an appropriate assistant entity from a group of assistant entities taking account of context data concerning an existing session responsive to receipt of a request from a first endpoint entity already joined to the session and constituted by a party having an endpoint system connected to the network to the service system requesting the presence of an assistant entity in the session, the request directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the existing session; and

(b) joining the selected assistant entity to the existing sessions.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein the assistant entity is a customer service representative and associated endpoint system.

3. A method according to claim 1, wherein the assistant entity is a software-based entity with an associated knowledge base.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein the data network is the internet, and the existing session has multiple parties connected to it through web browser functionality of associated endpoint systems, the service system providing follow-me page-push functionality to the party endpoint systems whereby to enable co-browsing by the parties joined to the session.

5. A method according to claim 4, wherein the context of the existing communication session comprises the subject of a web page currently being jointly browsed by the parties joined to the session service.

6. A method according to claim 1, wherein in step (a) the first endpoint entity uses an active feature of a web page served by the service system to request that a assistant entity join the session.

7. A method according to claim 1, wherein the service system, in setting up a communication session, creates a service-session functional entity which in the course of joining said endpoint entity to the session, sends connection details of the transport mechanism associated with the communication session to the endpoint entity or its proxy then using the connection details to connect itself to the transport mechanism.

8. A method according to claim 7, wherein the service-session functional entity comprises a session instance with generic behaviour for adding and removing endpoint entities to the communication session and for recording the endpoint entities currently joined to the communication session, and an associated service instance with service-specific behaviour determining when the session instance is to add and remove endpoint entities.

9. A method according to claim 1, wherein the service system, in setting up a communication session, creates a service-session functional entity that comprises a session instance with generic behaviour for adding and removing endpoint entities to the communication session and for recording the endpoint entities currently joined to the

communication session, and an associated service instance with service-specific behaviour determining when the session instance is to add and remove endpoint entities.

10. A method according to claim **1**, wherein the transport mechanism associated with a communication session provides multiple data transfer channel, for different media types, between endpoint entities joined to the communication session.

11. A method according to claim **10**, wherein the endpoint entities include web browser functionality and the service system provides functionality, and the transport mechanism provides channels, for at least two of the following:

text chat;

follow-me page-push; and

packetized voice.

12. A method according to claim **7**, wherein the transport mechanism associated with a communication session provides multiple data transfer channels, for different media types, between endpoint entities joined to the communication session, the connection details passed to said endpoint entity or its proxy comprising details of the media channels associated with the communication session, and the endpoint entity or its proxy using these details to establish corresponding media channel connections to the transport mechanism.

13. A method according to claim **7**, wherein the state of connection of said endpoint entity to the transport mechanism is signaled to the session-service functional entity by leg

messages passed between a leg controller of the endpoint entity or its proxy and a corresponding leg controller of the service-session functional entity.

14. A method according to claim 7, wherein the second endpoint entity or its proxy already has connection functionality for joining and participating in a communication session, the service-session functional entity of the communication session to which the endpoint entity is to be joined inviting this entity into the session by sending said connection details to the connection functionality of the entity or its proxy.

15. A method according to claim 7, wherein the service-session functional entity, in joining the first endpoint entity into the communication session, sends the latter both connection functionality for joining and participating in a communication session, and said connection details.

16. A method according to claim 15, wherein the connection details and functionality are sent in association with a web page served by the service system.

17. A service system comprising:

a session entity for establishing communication sessions and controlling the joining of endpoint entities to each such session;

a transport entity for establishing a transport mechanism for each session established by the session entity, the transport mechanism being arranged to allow the exchange of data across a network between endpoint entities joined to the session;

request-reception means operative to receive a request from a first endpoint entity already joined to a session and constituted by a party having an endpoint system connected to the network, the request being arranged for requesting the presence of an assistant entity in the session and directly or indirectly indicating the identity of the existing communication session; and

assistant-selection means arranged to be responsive to the receipt of said request by the request-reception means to select an appropriate assistant entity from a group of possible assistant entities taking account of the context of the existing communication session, the assistant-selection means being operative to cause the session entity to join the selected assistant entity to the session.

18. A service system according to claim **17**, wherein the assistant entity is a customer service representative and associated endpoint system.

19. A service system according to claim **17**, wherein the assistant entity is a software-based entity with an associated knowledge base.

20. A service system according to claim **17**, wherein the network is the Internet and the service system being arranged for providing follow-me page-push functionality to the party endpoint systems whereby to enable co-browsing by the parties joined to the session.

XI. Evidence Appendix

None.

XII. Related Proceedings Appendix

None.